AI-Powered Quadcopter Drones Used By The IDF To Commit Genocide In Gaza Are Flying Over American Cities

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Immediately after October 7, a little know company shipped over 100 reconnaissance drones to Israel for use in its siege of Gaza. Having been battle-tested on Palestinian civilians, the UAVs are now being used to surveil protesters across the US.

AI-powered quadcopter drones used by the IDF to commit genocide in Gaza are flying over American cities, surveilling protestors and automatically uploading millions of images to an evidence database.

The drones are made by a company called Skydio which in the last few years has gone from relative obscurity to quietly become a multi-billion dollar company and the largest drone manufacturer in the US.

The extent of Skydio drone usage across the US, and the extent to which their usage has grown in just a few years, is extraordinary. The company has contracts with more than 800 law enforcement and security agencies across the country, up from 320 in March last year, and their drones are being launched hundreds of times a day to monitor people in towns and cities across the country.

Skydio has extensive links with Israel. In the first weeks of the genocide the California-based company sent more than one hundred drones to the IDF with promises of more to come. How many more were delivered since that admission is unknown. Skydio has an office in Israel and partners with DefenceSync, a local military drone contractor operating as the middle man between drone manufacturers and the IDF. Skydio has also raised hundreds of millions of dollars from Israeli-American venture capitalists and from venture capital funds with extensive investments in Israel, including from Marc Andreessen's firm Andreessen Horowitz, or a16z.

And now these drones, tested in genocide and refined on Palestinians, are swarming American cities.

According to my research, almost every large American city has signed a contract with Skydio in the last 18 months, including Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, San Diego, Cleveland and Jacksonville. Skydio drones were recently used by city police departments to gather information at the 'No Kings' protests and were also used by Yale to spy on the anti-genocide protest camp set up by students at the university last year.

In Miami, Skydio drones are being used to spy on spring breakers, and in Atlanta the company has partnered with the Atlanta Police Foundation to install a permanent drone station within the massive new Atlanta Public Safety Training Center. Detroit recently spent nearly $300,000 on fourteen Skydio drones according to a city procurement report. Last month ICE bought an X10D Skydio drone, which automatically tracks and pursues a target. US Customs and Border Protection has bought thirty-three of the same drones since July.

The AI system behind Skydio drones is powered by Nvidia chips and enables their operation without a human user. The drones have thermal imaging cameras and can operate in places where GPS doesn't work, so-called 'GPS-denied environments.' They also reconstruct buildings and other infrastructure in 3D and can fly at more than 30 miles per hour.

The New York police were early adopters of Skydio drones and are particularly enthusiastic users. A spokesman recently told a drone news website that the NYPD launched more than 20,000 drone flights in less than a year, which would mean drones are being launched around the city 55 times per day. A city report last year said the NYPD at that time was operating 41 Skydio drones. A recent Federal Aviation Authority rule change, however, means that number will undoubtedly have increased and more generally underpins the massive expansion in the use of Skydio drones.

Prior to March this year, FAA rules meant that drones could only be used by US security forces if the operator kept the drone in sight. They also couldn't be used over crowded city streets. An FAA waiver issued that month opened the floodgates, allowing police and security agencies to operate drones beyond a visual line of sight and over large crowds of people. Skydio called the waiver ground-breaking. It was. The change has ushered in a Skydio drone buying spree by US police and security forces, with many now employing what is called a 'Drone As First Responder' program. Without the need to see the drone, and with drones free to cruise over city streets, the police are increasingly sending drones before humans to call outs and for broader investigative purposes. Cincinnati for example says that by the end of this year 90% of all call outs will be serviced first by a Skydio drone.

This extensive level of coverage is enabled by Skydio's docking platform hardware. These launch pads are placed in locations around a city enabling drones to be remote charged, launched and landed many miles away from police HQs. After launch, all the information gathered by these flights is both saved to an internal SD card and automatically uploaded to special software configured for law enforcement. This software is made by Axon, a major financial backer of Skydio and the controversial maker of Tasers and 'less-lethal weapons' used by police departments in the US and across the west. The software, Axon Evidence, enables, in the words of an Axon press

release, 'the automatic uploads of photos and video footage from drones into a digital evidence management system.'

Axon's equipment is also central to Israel's infrastructure of apartheid, with the company providing body cameras and Tasers to Israeli police forces and prison guards who routinely torture Palestinians. Axon, which participated in a $220 million Series E round of funding in Skydio, is just one of the many entities backing Skydio who serve a Zionist agenda.

Skydio's first investor in 2015 was Andreessen Horowitz (a16z) which provided $3 million of seed capital to the three-man team behind the drone maker. They have since invested tens of millions across numerous funding rounds. The founders of a16z, Marc Andreessen and Ben Horowitz, are both notorious Zionists. The firm was the most active venture capital investor in Israel in 2024 and this summer Andreessen and Horowitz visited Israel to meet with tech companies founded by ex-IDF and Unit 8200 war criminals.

Other Skydio investors include Next 47, which has an office in Israel headed by Moshe Zilberstein who worked in the IDF's computer spy center Mamram, and Hercules Capital whose managing director Ella-Tamar Adnahan is an Israeli-American described by Israeli media as "Israel's go-to tech banker in the US."

The saturation of US police departments with drone technology so closely connected to Israel, technology used to carry out war crimes is a frightening, if not unsurprising, development. Skydio drones will be central to the rapidly advancing proto-fascism in the US and the crack down on Antifa and other so-called 'domestic terrorists' by the Trump administration. In this context, the bigger surprise is that the rapid expansion of Israel-linked surveillance drone technology across America has so far gone largely under the radar.

Skydio should also make it on to the agenda of Zohran Mamdani. Recently criticized for saying "when the boot of the NYPD is on your neck, it's been laced by the IDF," Skydio is just another example that shows he's right. If he has the courage of his convictions, he could do worse than use his powers as mayor to shut down the NYPD's Skydio deal.

Skydio is also a large supplier to the Department of Defence, recently signing a contract to provide the US Army with reconnaissance drones. As a significant supplier to both military and civilian security forces, it raises questions about what information is or will be shared between the US military and domestic security agencies via the Skydio-Axon digital evidence management system.

Skydio shows once again how Gaza is the laboratory for weapons makers, the place where new surveillance and apartheid technologies are tested, before being refined and used in the West. And next year Skydio is rolling out new indoor drones. We can only speculate as to what extent these new drones were informed by the 'learnings' accrued via genocide.

Source: https://www.donotpanic.news/p/the-ai-drones-used-in-gaza-now-surveilling

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